

# AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR LAND AT PREES HEATH

## INTRODUCTION

The site was visited by the Resource Planning Group in December 1991 and January 1992. An Agricultural Land Classification survey was undertaken and soils augered to 100 cms, unless prevented from achieving this depth by stone.

## LOCATION, ALTITUDE AND RELIEF

The site lies immediately to the east of the A49(T) at Prees Heath, on the old airfield. It is split into two blocks by the A41(T). It is bordered by agricultural land and minor lanes. The land lies at an altitude between 90 metres and 96 metres, and is level or very gently sloping. Altitude and relief are non-limiting in the classification of the site.

## CLIMATE AND RAINFALL

The main parameters used in the assessment of the climatic limitations are average annual rainfall (AAR) and accumulated temperature (ATO). For this site these figures are 743 mm and 1372°C respectively indicating that there are no climatic limitations on the site. The field capacity days figure for the site is 169 days. The mean last frost is in early May.

## GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The site is underlain by Lower Lias Clays, with a drift deposit of Glacial Sand and Gravel. The associated soils are typically loamy sands over sands, with limited areas of deeper sandy loams overlying loamy sands.

## LAND USE

At the time of survey winter cereals were being grown in the north of the site, and adjoining the grain stores in the east. Cereal stubble fields were found in the centre of the site, with grass leys in the south and south-west. There were extensive tracts of heathland.

## AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

Sub-grade 3a accounts for 50.9 hectares and 41.6% of the site. It is widespread throughout the site, particularly in the western areas. Soils are typically loamy sands or occasionally sandy loams overlying loamy sands, often with sand at depth. The stone content of these soils is very variable, and some borings were impenetrable below 70 cms. Droughtiness is the main limitation to the agricultural use of this land.

Sub-grade 3b accounts for 24.8 hectares and 20.6% of the site. It is most common in the northern part of the site. Soils are typically loamy sands overlying sands, often impenetrable below 60 cms. Droughtiness is the main limitation to the agricultural use of most of this land. In limited areas, stoniness is a major problem, particularly close to old runways, and this has been a limiting factor in the grading of the land.

Non-agricultural land accounts for 42.7 hectares and 34.8% of the site. It is comprised of areas of heathland and old runways/airfield installations.

Woodland accounts for 3.0 hectares and 2.5% of the site.

Urban accounts for 0.95 hectares and 0.8% of the site.

### SUMMARY

#### Total Application Area

Grade	ha	% of site	% of agric area
3a	50.9	41.6	67.2
3b	24.8	20.6	32.8
Non Ag.	42.7	34.8	-
Woodland	3.0	2.5	-
Urban	<u>0.9</u>	<u>0.5</u>	<u>-</u>
	122.3	100.0	100.0

#### Mineral Application Area

Grade	ha	% of site	% of agric area
3a	28.6	45.9	63.3
3b	16.6	26.6	36.7
Non Ag.	16.2	26.0	-
Urban	<u>0.9</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>-</u>
	62.3	100.0	100.0

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